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“Rabbi, when did you get here?” (John 6:26).

Acts 6:8-15; John 6:22-29

A favorite device of the author of the fourth Gospel is misunderstanding. Jesus says one thing, the disciples or crowds think another, and the truth is in the translation. For example, the word “to see” means both to see physically and to believe. The disciples must learn to transcend the first meaning to gain deeper insight, which is faith. The Pharisees say they see, but they are blind.

In today’s Gospel passage, the crowds, who have just been miraculously fed the loaves and fishes, are preoccupied with how Jesus got to the other side of lake if he didn’t leave with the Apostles in the boat. The author tells us at the beginning that Jesus has walked across the lake. The crowds confront Jesus with the question of when or how he got across the lake.

They are far from understanding either the multiplication of the loaves or his “passage” over the water, which in the Gospels is about his Passover through the waters of death. The scenes in which the disciples in the boat think they are seeing a ghost when Jesus comes toward them walking on the water are actually resurrection appearances. The many crossings back and forth on the lake during his ministry are rehearsals for Easter faith. To see and believe in the resurrection, they must learn how to make this same passage themselves, to transcend this life to begin to live their risen life with Jesus. They, beginning with Peter, must even have the courage to walk on water with Jesus.

As long as we try to understand the Resurrection or the Eucharist in physical terms, we have not yet made the leap of faith. Thomas wanted proof, but when he

encountered the risen Jesus personally, he knew him as his Lord and God. What Nicodemus could not grasp about being born again would happen for him only after the crucifixion. Our own Easter encounter will occur when our discipleship deepens by walking with Jesus each day. The more we pray to know him, the more he says to us, "Come and See."

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